

Is Tobacco Smoking Injurious to health?

MEDICAL OPINIONS

COLLATED FROM THE

— *L A N C E T* —

BY HERBERT H. TIDSWELL,

*Member of the Royal College of Surgeons,
England, 1877;*

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London, 1881;*

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The *Lancet*, Feb. 7, 1857.

CORRESPONDENCE.

“AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.”

THE TOBACCO CONTROVERSY IS SMOKING INJURIOUS?

Letter from MR. SOLLY, F.R.S.

“To the Editor of the *Lancet*.

“SIR,

“In the course of my practice, I have met with many individuals who, like myself, have abandoned smoking because they thought it did not agree with them; many have done so at my suggestion.

“I have never found one who does not assert most positively, that he has been in better health since, and that his intellectual activity has been increased. [:]

“No one will dispute that the *Lancet* has done much to relieve suffering humanity, but never in my opinion, has either the surgical instrument, or the periodical, done so much good, as the present devotion of its pages to this most

important question upon which the happiness or misery of thousands depends.

“So strongly do I feel its importance, that I believe if the habit of smoking in England advances as it has done in the last ten or twelve years, that the English character will lose that combination of energy and solidity which has hitherto distinguished it and that England will sink in the scale of nations.

“The more I think of the tobacco question, the more it haunts me. I feel that I cannot do justice to its importance, but I am anxious to add something to my last communication.

“The profession have no idea of the ignorance of the public of the nature of tobacco. Even intelligent well educated men stare in astonishment when you tell them that tobacco is one of the strongest poisons we possess.

“Now is this right?

“Has the medical profession done its duty?

“Ought we not as a body to have told the public, that of all our poisons, it is the most insidious, uncertain, and in full doses, the most deadly? []

“What a blessing it would have been to mankind, if all men had shrunk from this plague of the brain as did the first Napoleon.

“One inhalation was enough: in disgust, he exclaimed, ‘Oh, the swine! my stomach turns. It is a habit only fit to amuse sluggards.’

[]

“I have been asked to produce facts in proof of the deleterious effects of tobacco. No man

likes to be held up as a victim of tobacco smoke, though I could name many whose health has been decidedly injured by it. An old dresser of mine at the Hospital,—who was an amiable, attentive pupil, but never very efficient,—smoked a good deal when he was at the Hospital, but after he left, he was smoking nearly all day long. His debility was now so great, that he was obliged to have a glass of bitter beer in the morning before he could rise. He was not addicted to drinking, and in that sense was not intemperate.

“The whole of his ailments were produced by tobacco smoking. He could not attend to his profession, he gave up his practice and was sent to Brighton for change of air. Improving slowly there, he was at last sent out to New Zealand, and if he has left tobacco behind him, he will land a new man, if not, his fate is sealed. I know a valued servant in a family where I attend whose memory was failing him, his face getting yellow, and his hand shaking, so that those who did not know him attributed his condition to drinking. He abandoned smoking, and in two years was an altered man.

Signed, SAMUEL SOLLY.”

The complete letters are to be found in the *Lancet*, Feb. 7 and Feb. 14, 1857. SAMUEL SOLLY was Surgeon and Lecturer on Surgery of St. Thomas' Hospital, London, also Medical Examiner of the Royal Exchange, the Victoria, the Crown, and the new Equitable Insurance Societies, also a Fellow of the Royal Society.

Vide *Lancet*, Jan. 3, 1857—

Is Smoking Injurious? by DAVID JOHNSTON,
M.R.C.S., Wolverhampton.

HAROLD FENN, M.R.C.S, Nayland.

J. B. NEIL, Jan. 3 and 10.

Lancet, Jan. 17. J. A. M'DONAGH, M.R.C.S.,
Sedentary Suicide.

Lancet, Jan. 24. H.G.W.

Lancet, Jan. 31. DAVID JOHNSON.

Lancet, Feb. 14—

J. PIDDRICK, M.D.

DUNCAN SMITH, M.R.C.S.

WALTER TYRRELL, M.R.C.S.

J. F. WATSON, M.R.C.S.

T. C. WOOD, M.D.

WALTER SUMPTER.

Lancet, Feb. 21—

ARTHUR HILL HASSALL, M.D.

Lancet, Feb. 21—

W. R. PUGH, M.D.

P. J. HYNES, M.D.

M. EVANS, M.R.C.S.

WM. CORTIS, M.R.C.S.

“CLERICUS ANGLICANUS.”

Lancet, Feb. 28, 1857—

Effects of Tobacco on Europeans in India,
letter from JAMES R. MARTIN, F.R.S.

Smoking not a cause of Insanity, letter from
DR. BUCKNILL, M.D., Devon County
Asylum.

The Salutary Effects of Smoking, letter from
W. H. RANKING, M.D., Cantab, Norwich.

Fifty Years' Experience, letter from JOHN
HIGGINBOTTOM, F.R.S.

Diseases produced by Smoking, letter from
SAMUEL BOOTH, Esq., L.S.A.

Influence of Tobacco on Sailors, letter from
DR. GALLAGHAN, R.N.

Benefits and Evils of Smoking, letter from
J. PRETTY, M.D.

Lancet, Feb. 28, 1857—

Effects on the Senses, letter from F. BROWN,
M.D.

Smoking amongst Miners, Navvies and Women,
letter from W. McDONALD, ESQ., Surgeon to
the Garnkirk Works.

Lancet, March 7—

D. HOOPER, B.A. and M.B., Lond.

JOHN HIGGINBOTTOM, F.R.S.

J. TAYLOR, L.S.A.

C. B. GARRETT, M.D.

LEMUEL BROCKLEBANK, M.A., Cantab.

GARRETT BUTLER, M.R.C.S.

Effects of Smoking on a Family, W. B.

Smoking by Medical Students, "D. P. STUDENS."

Should Medical Students Smoke? by M.D.

Lancet, March 14, 1857—

Temperance and Justice, Handmaids of Truth
in the Tobacco Question, "Audi alteram
partem," by JOSEPH SAMSON GAMGEE.

Lancet, March 14, 1857—

A case of Narcotic Poisoning from Smoking Tobacco, by DAVID JOHNSON, M.R.C.S.

A Student's "Bird's Eye" View, by a St. Bartholomew's Man.

Smoking among the Graduates at Cambridge.

Tobacco and Crime, by a "Philanthropist."

Lancet, March 21, 1857—

Effects of Smoking on Longevity, by PETER EADE, M.D., Norwich.

Burton on Tobacco, by J. PROWSE, M.R.C.S.

Effects of Tobacco in Ague, by WM. DIMOCK, M.R.C.S.

Is Smoking a Blessing? by WALTER SUMPTER.

Smoking and Delirium Tremens, by O. STUDENS.

What is meant by Moderate Smoking?

When to begin Smoking?

Caution to Smokers,

by "PHILANTHROPUS SECUNDUS."

Lancet, March 21, 1857—

Are our present great Statesmen Smokers ?

“ SIR,

“It would be most interesting to ascertain whether the ‘leading men’ in the House of Commons are Smokers. Many of your thousands of readers must be in a position to supply this information.

I am, Sir,

Yours etc.,

March, 1857.

_____”

Lancet, March 28, 1857—

Can Tobacco be deprived of its Injurious Properties? by W. SETH GILL.

Smoking as a Remedy and as a Poison, by
THOMAS HAWKSLEY, M.D.

Lancet, April 4, 1857—

Moderation in Smoking, by JOHN TRIPE, M.D.,
Medical Officer of Health to the Hackney District.

Tax on Tobacco, by W. SPONG, M.R.C.S.

Another Whiff on the Tobacco Question, by
T. STEPHENSON, M.R.C.S.

Lancet, April 4, 1857—

Students' Cigar Bills at the Universities, Hints
to Paterfamilias, by J. B. NEIL.

Smoking with Legal Students.

"SIR,

"The following medicinal treatment may prove of service to all inveterate smokers in abandoning the habit, the invariable excuse being, that they experience in trying to do so, hypochondriacal and nervous sensations, etc. By adopting this plan they will find these sensations quickly vanish, and their muscular and nervous system in a few days, restored to its proper tone.

Tonic aperient pills,

Disulphate of quinine, 12 grains ;

Compound rhubarb pills, 36 grains ;

Compound extract of colocynth, 9 grains.

Mix and divide into 12 pills. One or two at bed time.

The mixture.

Ammoniated tincture of valerian, 6 drachms.

Camphor mixture, 7 ounces. Mix.

A fourth part three times a day."

I am, Sir,

Your obedient, humble servant,

J. R. N."

The habit of smoking was condemned by 29
writers and upheld by 13.

“ Audi alteram partem.”

And the Lord said :

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat :

But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not : and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

St. Luke, chapter xxii.

verses 31 and 32.